

DeFazio's Efforts to Lower Health Care/Medicare Costs

DeFazio supported the reforms adopted in 2010 that give seniors access to preventative care in terms of vital health screenings and annual physicals. These reforms will also explore better ways to pay doctors. Today's billing system rewards doctors who see a high volume of patients with short appointments and order a high volume of tests and procedures. We can reduce health care costs by paying doctors to successfully treat patients with outcome based medicine that avoids unnecessary medical tests, invasive procedures, and hospital admissions.

Insurance industry must play by the same rules

In 2010, the House voted nearly unanimously to pass a bill DeFazio spearheaded that would take away the insurance industry's special exemption from anti-trust law. Unfortunately, the effort died in the Senate. In February 2011, he offered the same bill as an amendment to H.R. 1, but the Republican leadership blocked a vote. Instead, H.R. 1 repeals the critical reforms enacted by the health care law. Not only would their bill allow insurance companies to continue to be exempt from anti-trust law, it reinstates their ability to discriminate based on age, sex, and pre-existing conditions, and drop your policy if you get sick. DeFazio will continue to fight for anti-trust coverage of the insurance industry until this unwarranted loophole is closed.

Allow government to negotiate for lower drug prices

In 2003, Congress passed Medicare Part D, which included a provision that prevents the federal government from negotiating better prescription drug prices for Medicare recipients. This has cost taxpayers over half a trillion dollars in hand-outs to the drug industry, all of it borrowed. It also included a massive donut hole in coverage forcing seniors reliant on prescription medicine to pay thousands of dollars. I strongly opposed this provision and been working ever since to fix it.

DeFazio is a cosponsor of the Prescription Drug Savings and Choice Act, which allows the federal government to negotiate with drug companies and take advantage of its ability to purchase prescription drugs in bulk. This bill will save taxpayers over \$20 billion and provide seniors with lower cost premiums and copays for prescriptions. Seniors shouldn't have to ration their pills or limit their dosage because they can't afford to pay for prescriptions each month.

Help with Medicare Premiums

The Qualified Medicare Beneficiaries program helps seniors with monthly income under \$1,226 (\$1,665 for couples) cover their Medicare premiums. Call 1-800-282-8096 and the Oregon Department of Human Services will connect you with a local office to determine your eligibility.

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